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Scott Michael Sandberg, M.L.I.S.
Indiana University Northwest John W. Anderson Library



Epidemiology Profile of East Chicago, IN

In July 2007, Geminus Corporation received a block grant from SAMHSA/CSAP and administered by FSSA/DMHA. This block grant was named the Strategic Prevention Framework State Incentive Grant (SPF-SIG). The SPF-SIG grant program represents a continuation of ongoing CSAP initiatives to encourage states to engage in data-based decision-making in the area of substance abuse prevention planning and grant making. The SPF-SIG uses a five-step process known to promote youth development, reduce risk-taking behaviors, build assets and resilience, and prevent problem behaviors across the life span. Efforts have been directed at reducing cocaine use among the age group 18 to 25.

East Chicago's Local Epidemiology Outcomes Workgroup (LEOW) identified areas in which East Chicago exhibits significantly higher rates in consumption associated with substance abuse in comparison with that of the nation, state, and county. The LEOW relies on various data sources such as the State's annual SEOW report, Communities That Care Survey (CTCS), National Archive of Criminal Justice (NACJD), Treatment Episode Data System (TEDS), and focus groups to provide both quantitative and qualitative information each year. The focus groups were moderated by Tim Sutherland, **Scott M. Sandberg, MLIS**, and Cele Morris of the IU Northwest Center for Data and Analysis. In addition, the East Chicago Police provided drug arrest data. This data was used to produce geographic information system (GIS) mapping.

LEOW graduate students designed a new drug use and abuse survey that took nine months to be approved by the Purdue Institutional Review Board since it was translated and made available in Spanish. Those results are now available. This survey examined family dynamics, mental health, co-morbidity, substance use and other risk factors. Results reflect the adult population of 18 years and up. This includes the population of 18-25 year old's that the SPF SIG funded.

New data includes information gathered by the local hospital utilizing their new data collection network -Drug Abuse Warning Network (DAWN). DAWN is a public health surveillance system sponsored by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). DAWN monitors drug related hospital emergency department visits and drug related deaths to track the impact of drug use, misuse, and abuse.

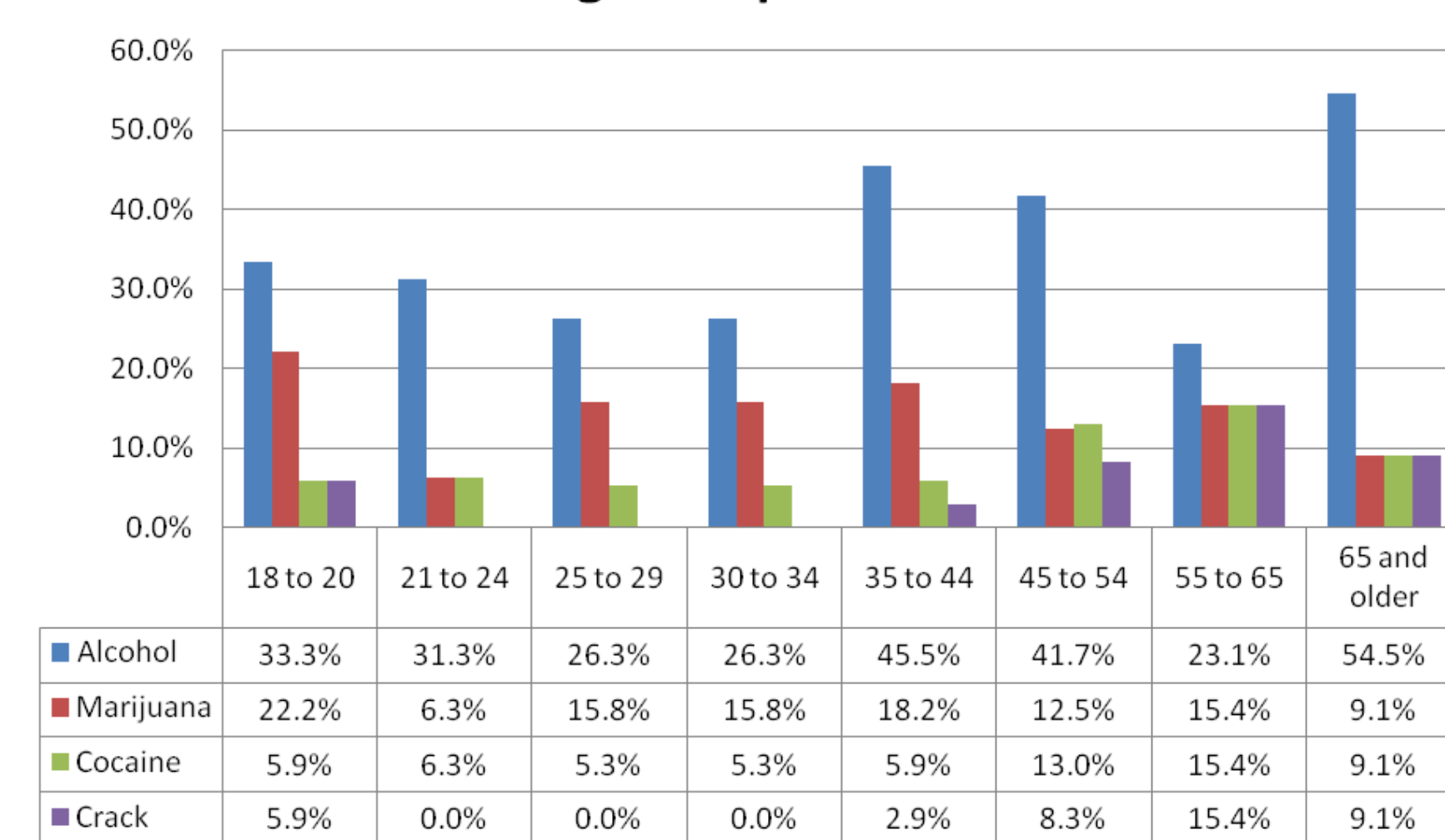
Four focus groups were planned and administered; but, due to a low number of participants the group resembled more of an interview. However, seven organizations participated providing insightful information. New Police data regarding new drug incidents have been overlaid with preceding year's data and suggest a large decrease in drug related incidents for the third year in a row. There does seem to be a decreased number of incidents reported near the new police substation than in the preceding years. This raises more questions than it answers.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

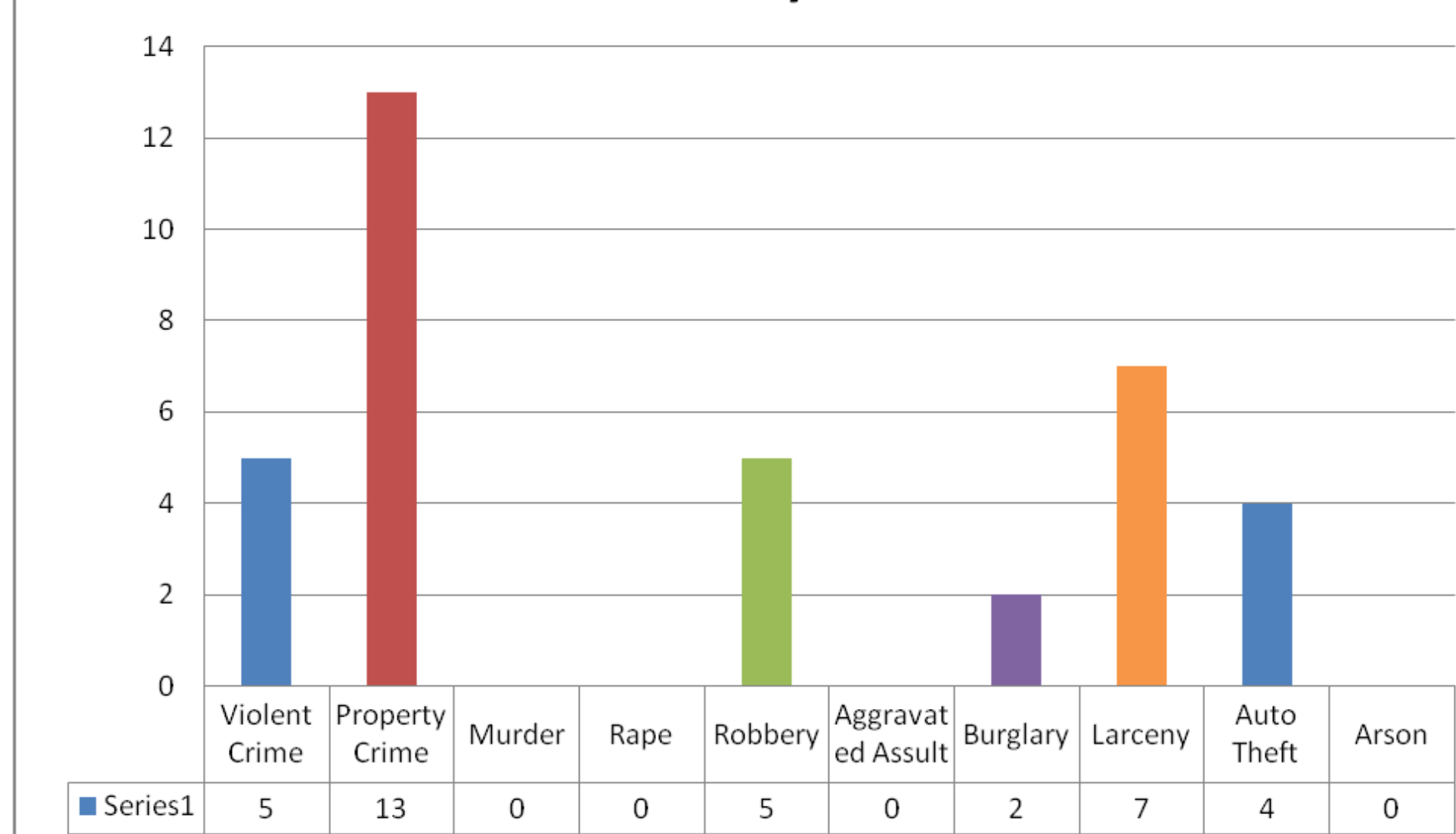
The data for this report were gathered from various publicly available federal state and local surveys and data sets. The following paragraphs describe these surveys and their findings. Specifically, information was derived from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), the Indiana State Treatment Needs Assessment Project for Lake County, the national, state, and Lake County Treatment Episode Data System (TEDS), the Tri-City Comprehensive Community Mental Health Center, the Indiana Alcohol and Other Drugs County Level Epidemiological Indicators (CLEI), Drug Abuse Warning Network (DAWN), East Chicago Drug Use and Mental Health survey, Indiana Department of Education, Geolytics, Inc., and the United States Federal Bureau of Investigation. This data allows for an overview of how East Chicago, Indiana compares with state and national levels of cocaine and other drug use, and other risk factors. In addition to these sources, information was obtained from focus group meetings, and GIS mapping was created from data obtained from the East Chicago Police Department.



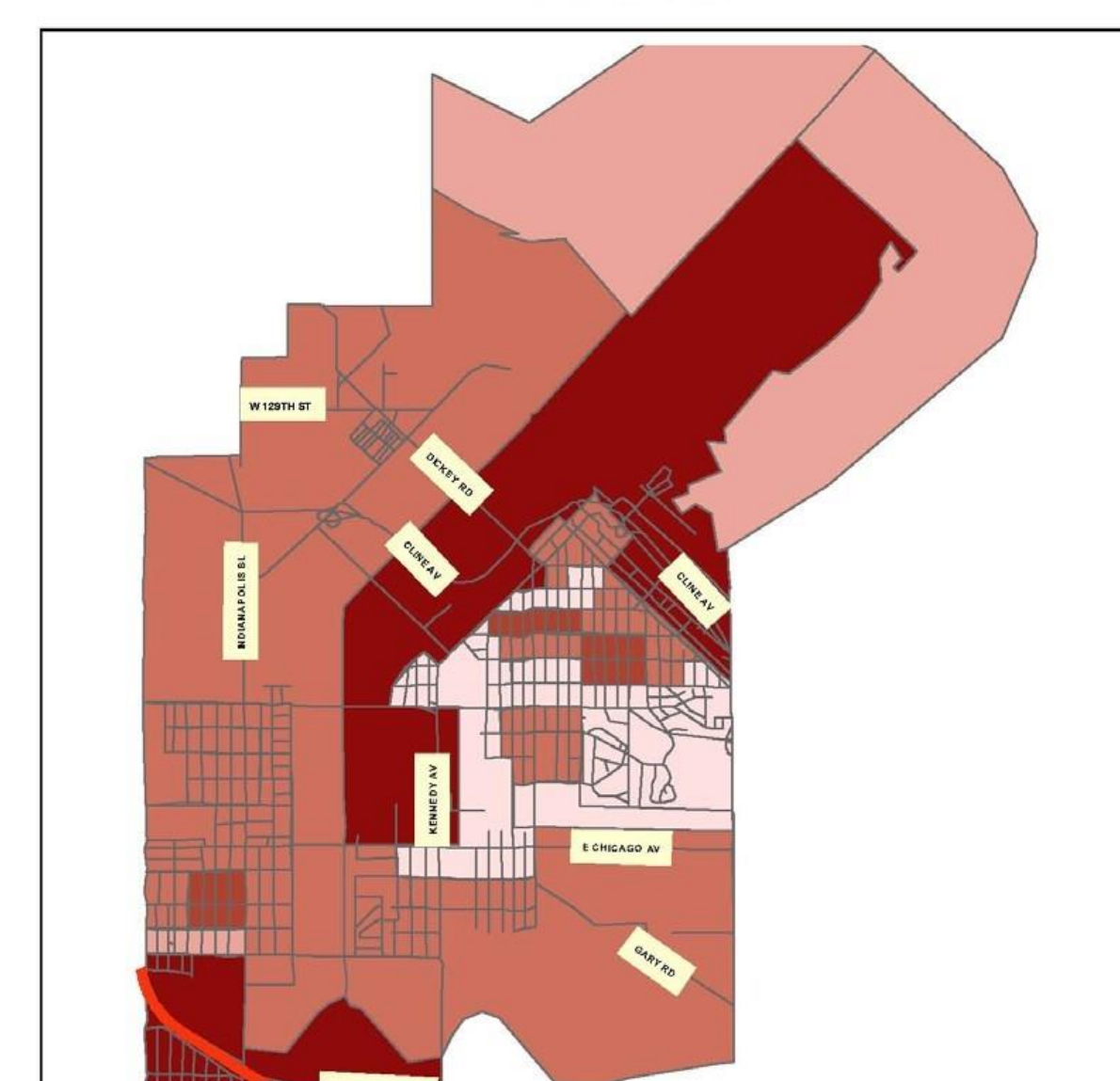
Report of Monthly Drug Use:
Age Comparison



Juvenile Arrests by Offense 2009



East Chicago, Indiana
Census Blockgroup
Estimated Population Change (%)
2000 to 2009



East Chicago Block Group Boundary
Estimated Population Change 2000 - 2009 (%)

Population Change (%)
< -10
-10 to -5
-5 to 0
0 to 5
5 to 10
10 to 15
15 to 20
20 to 25
25 to 30
30 to 35

0 0.5 1 Miles

2009 Estimates provided by:
Geolytics, Inc.

Prepared by:
Northwest Indiana Center for Data & Analysis
Indiana University Northwest, 2010

RESULTS

Overall, the results of the five focus groups were disturbing, but hopeful. The participants expressed the seriousness of substance abuse among the youth of East Chicago, with many factors, e.g., peer pressure, erosion of the family unit; gangs; unemployment, poverty, etc., contributing to the epidemic, and how faith based organizations cope with the situation. Comments also suggested that religious organizations will continue to evolve as the problem of substance abuse continues to affect their congregations and community; devising the ways and means necessary to deal with this issue.



CONCLUSIONS

- Survey results seem to confirm that there is a positive correlation between mental health issues and drug abuse.
- Faith based organizations are viable, important institutions in East Chicago, and clergy are interested in helping address drug abuse.
- Faith based leaders agree external funding would be welcomed if it would allow their congregations to partner for services that include licensed counselors and related professional services.
- There is a gap and an opportunity for some entity to bring African American and Hispanic/Latino congregations together to look at how faith based organizations could work together to address substance abuse problems in a holistic way.
- After declines in population in East Chicago over the last years, there is projected to be a modest increase of migration into the City within the next five years.
- Illegal drug use in East Chicago remains a major problem with alcohol and marijuana serving as gateway socially acceptable drugs.
- Reasons for possible decline in reporting of crime could include: stop reporting for fear of retribution, expectation that nothing will be done, or recent implementation of a new system of reporting that yields different numbers.
- It is inspiring to find the number of children able to thrive in East Chicago despite problems of crime, dropout rates, drug abuse, etc.
- Perception and reality of corruption in East Chicago continues to plague the city.
- More East Chicago based studies around social issues such as substance abuse are needed.